DECLASSIFIED Pol 14 VIET S

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

6

Action

CONFIDENTIAL

07792

1966 AUG 9 AM 1 13

Saigon R 9/9/66

Info

FE VV MJA563JIA530
RR RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 2993 2210500
ZNY CCCCC
SS R 090445Z AUG 66
G FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
SP TO SECSTATE WASHDC
SAH INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC
L STATE GRNC
H BT
SAL C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 2993
IO
P AUGUST 09.
USIA
NSC CINCPAC FOR POLAD
INR SUBJ: "THOMAS GROUP"
CIA
NSA REF : STATE 22122
DOD
AID

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 10/5/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

normal

Pol 14 Viets
XR Pol 14 Dem Rep

1. WE BELIEVE THAT GVN REACTION AND, FOR THAT MATTER, REACTION OF NON-OFFICIAL VIETNAMESE, WOULD BE EXTREMELY NEGATIVE TO PROPOSAL THAT A SELF-APPOINTED GROUP OF AMERICAN CITIZENS COME TO VIET NAM TO OBSERVE THE SEPTEMBER 11 ELECTIONS. WE CAN ASSURE YOU THAT ON THE BASIS OF OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH GVN AND CERTAIN OUT-POLITICIANS, ENTIRE QUESTION OF OBSERVERS IS VERY SENSITIVE ISSUE HERE BECAUSE IT IMPINGES SO DIRECTLY ON NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. GROUP SUCH AS THE THOMAS GROUP, ESPECIALLY IF IT CONTAINS INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE

RSR

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 2993 C O N F I D E N T I A L
NOT SYMPATHETIC TO NON-COMMUNIST CAUSE OR FAVOR A NEUTRALIST SOLUTION, WOULD NOT BE WELCOME HERE AND COULD CONCEIVABLY BECOME INVOLVED IN INCIDENTS NOT UNLIKE THOSE WHICH "VIET-NIK" GROUP ENCOUNTERED FOUR MONTHS AGO.

2. FOR US TO APPEAR TO BE SPONSOR[illegible] SUCH A THING WOULD MAKE U.S. LOOK COLONIAL AND WOULD LOOK LIKE A RATHER GROSS INTERFERENCE IN VIETNAMESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

3. THERE IS AN ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FALL ELECTIONS HERE AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. THERE IT WAS THE QUESTION OF SELECTING GOVERNMENTAL LEADERSHIP WHERE FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES NONE EXISTED. HERE, THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT ITSELF HAS ORGANIZED AN ELECTION FOR A CONSTITUENT

MICROFILMED BY [illegible]

DECLASSIFIED

ASSEMBLY. THIS BODY WILL THEN DECIDE ON THE FORMAT OF VIETNAM'S FUTURE GOVERNMENT. AN ORDERLY PROCESS HAS BEEN OUTLINED BY A DE FACTO GOVERNMENT AND THAT GOVERNMENT, DESPITE ITS WEAKNESSES OR FLAWS, HAS IN HAND THE LEVERS OF POWER AND DOES NOT INTEND TO RELINQUISH THEM UNTIL THE PROCESS IT HAS SET IN MOTION HAS RUN ITS COURSE.

4. WE REALIZE THAT GROUP SUCH AS "THOMAS GROUP" IS CAPABLE OF BRINGING IMPORTANT POLITICAL PRESSURE TO BEAR IN THE UNITED STATES IF THEY ORGANIZE AND THEN DISCOVER THAT THEIR PROJECT IS

VIEWED UNFAVORABLY BY THE OFFICIALS OF THE COUNTRY TO WHICH THEY DESIRE TO GO. WE WOULD HOPE THAT BEFORE THIS POINT IS REACHED IDEA CAN BE GOTTEN ACROSS TO THEM THAT MASSIVE FOREIGN PRESS CORPS AND ACCREDITED DIPLOMATS WILL BE SCRUTINIZING MINUTELY SEPTEMBER 11 ELECTIONS. IN THIS REGARD IT MIGHT BE WELL IF VU VAN THAI, ON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON, COULD ISSUE SOME PUBLIC STATEMENT DETAILING JUST WHAT GVN IS DOING TO PROVIDE FOREIGN OBSERVATION OF THE ELECTIONS. WE WILL BE TALKING WITH DO WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS TO CONVEY TO HIM SUBSTANCE OF STATE'S 23310. WE WILL URGE HIM TO MOVE AS QUICKLY AS HE CAN TO FORMALIZE AND PUBLICIZE HIS PROPOSAL ON OBSERVERS, PERHAPS BEFORE THAI RETURNS TO WASHINGTON. LODGE

BT